**SOCI 3120: SOCIOLOGY OF HEALTH & ILLNESS**

**SPRING 2023**

**Instructor:** Associate Professor Dr. Gül Seçkin

**Class Dates/Location/Time**: TuTh 9:30-10:50a.m. CHEM 106

**Emails:** gul.seckin@unt.edu

**Office Hours:** Tuesday 11:00 am-12:00 pm and by appointment.

**COURSE OVERVIEW**

Medical sociology is the subfield that takes the interaction of medicine and social factors as its object of study. Scholars within this subfield examine different aspects of this dynamic relationship. Drawing from a diverse range of theoretical and empirical approaches, this course provides an overview of the field's past, present, and future, emphasizing the social construction of illness and subjective experiences of illness. We will explore the social origins of illness and the ways it shapes health inequalities. This course will inform how socio-historical context, social factors, emerging social trends, and economic, political, and socio-technological advancements influence health outcomes. This course will encourage students to consider complex socio-medical issues and their unique impact on diverse populations beyond the biomedical approach. Students will learn to think critically about the material through readings, writings, and class discussions. They will consider the critical challenges for the future of medical sociology in an uncertain and rapidly shifting and changing societal issues and problems. The content of the class will introduce students to the complicated reciprocal interactions between biomedical science and social, cultural, technological, economic, and political factors. By the end of the semester, students will be able to 1. Identify the pathways and mechanisms through which social context impacts individual health and illness. 2. Identify how changing social demographics, emerging social trends, and scientific and technological advancements influence the current field of medical sociology and biomedical practice by health providers. 3. Consider the distinct challenges facing individuals of diverse backgrounds.

**REQUIRED COURSE READINGS**

(1) Cockerham, W. C. (2022). *Medical Sociology.* Routledge. (B1)

(2) Barry, A.M., Yuill, C. (2022). *Understanding the Sociology of Health.* Sage. (B2)

**COURSE SCHEDULE**

The course schedule specified below is subject to revision as deemed necessary by the professor. There will be a mix of in-person, online, and zoom sessions. Make sure that you are aware of the announcements.

**Week 1: Jan 17-19**

* Chapter 1: Sociological Theory: Explaining and Theorizing (B2)

**Week 2: Jan 24-Jan 26**

* Chapter 3: A Brief History of Health and Healing (B2)

**Week 3: Jan 31-Feb 2**

* Chapter 1: Medical Sociology (B1)
* Chapter 2: Understanding Health (B2)

**Week 4: Feb 8-10**

* Chapter 2: Social Epidemiology (B1)

**Week 5: Feb 7-9**

* Chapter 3: COVID-19 (B1)
* Chapter 12: Pandemics & Society (B2)

**Week 6: Feb 14-16**

* Chapter 10: Sociology of the Body: Chronic Illness and Disability (B2)
* Chapter 15: Death and Dying (B2)

**Week 7: Feb 21-23**

* Chapter 11: Health, Ageing, and the Life Course (B2)
* Chapter 16: Health Technologies (B2)

**Week 8: Feb 28-March 2**

* Chapter 4: The Social Demography of Health: Social Class (B1)
* Chapter 5: Inequality and Health (B2)

**Week 9: March 7-9**

* Chapter 5: The Social Demography of Health: Gender (B1)
* Chapter 6: Gender and Health (B2)
* Chapter 9: Sexualities and Health (B2)

**Week 10: March 14-16**

* Spring Break

**Week 11: March 21-23**

* Review
* Take-Home Mid-Term is due on Thursday March, 23, 2023

**Week 12: March 28-March 30**

* Chapter 6: The Social Demography of Health: Age & Race (B1)
* Chapter 7: Race, Ethnicity & Health (B2)

**Week 13: April 4-6**

* Chapter 7: Social Stress and Health (B1)
* Chapter 8: Mental Health and Emotional Distress (B2)

**Week 14: April 11-13**

* Chapter 8: Health Behavior and Lifestyles (B1)
* Chapter 9: Illness Behavior and the Sick Role (B1)
* Chapter 14: Complementary and Alternative Medicine (B1)

**Week 15: April 18-April 20**

* Chapter 14: Sport, Health, Exercise, and Wellbeing (B2)
* Chapter 4: Climate Change, Nature and Wellbeing

**Week 16: April 25-April 27**

* Chapter 10: Doctor-Patient Interaction (B1)
* Chapter 12: The Physician in a Changing Society (B1)

**May 2-May 4**

* Chapter 16: Health Care Reform and Health Policy in the United States (B1)
* Chapter 17: Global Health Care (B2)

Take-Home Final Exam is due on Thursday May 11, 2023

**COURSE GRADE COMPONENTS**

There will be three primary evaluations of student success, as listed below. These assignments will be opportunities for students to demonstrate what they have learned in the course as they focus on the content of the course material.

**(1) Take-Home Midterm:** You will respond to questions from your course textbooks to encourage critical thinking. The midterm will count for 100 points.

**(2) Journal Presentation:** Students will choose five articles from a leading sociology journal to present the most recent scientific work in medical sociology. This brief presentation (catchy PowerPoint slides would be interesting and fun but not required) for each article will be accompanied by a one-page summary of each article (could be bullet points) with an emphasis on the aims, results, and conclusions sections of the article. We will discuss these articles in class based on your presentation of the information. It is advisable that you choose topics we cannot cover in this course due to time limitations. This assignment will count as 75 points of your grade. Students will sign-up for any week they wish to present during the semester. Further instructions will be provided in class and on Canvas.

**(3) Take-Home Final Exam:** You will implement your knowledge of the course material and your critical thinking skills in response to the questions provided. The final exam will count for 125 points. Detailed instructions will be provided on Canvas.

(4) **Attendance:** Regular attendance will count as 50 points of your grades.

**GRADING**

The total number of points that can be earned in this class is 350. The Canvas course grade calculation will convert points to a 100-metric system. The following distribution will be used to determine your final course grade:

A: 90-100; B: 80-89; C: 70-79; D: 60-69; F: 59 or below.

**SPECIFIC COURSE POLICIES**

Success in this class is measured by the degree to which students demonstrate effort, understanding, and critical analysis of the subject matter. All assignments must include the following: • Cover page including title, name, date submitted, course number, and course title • One-inch margins • 1.5 spacing • Times New Roman, 12-point font.

**UNT POLICIES**

I recommend you to refer to UNT Policies (regarding withdrawals, student accommodation with health challenges, absence due to athletic events, student misconduct, academic dishonesty and the services). Pertinent Information can be found at the following websites:

<https://disability.unt.edu/>;

<http://deanofstudents.unt.edu/conduct>;

<http://deanofstudents.unt.edu/withdrawals>

**Academic Integrity Standards and Consequences.** According to UNT Policy 06.003, Student Academic Integrity, academic dishonesty occurs when students engage in behaviors including, but not limited to cheating, fabrication, facilitating academic dishonesty, forgery, plagiarism, and sabotage. A finding of academic dishonesty may result in a range of academic penalties or sanctions ranging from admonition to expulsion from the University.

**ADA Accommodation Statement.** UNT makes reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Accommodation (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will provide a student with an accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding one’s specific course needs. Students may request accommodations at any time, however, ODA notices of accommodation should be provided as early as possible in the semester to avoid any delay in implementation. Note that students must obtain a new letter of accommodation for every semester and must meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. For additional information see the ODA website at [disability.unt.edu.](http://disability.unt.edu/)

**Prohibition of Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation** (Policy 16.004). The University of North Texas (UNT) prohibits discrimination and harassment because of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status, or any other characteristic protected under applicable federal or state law in its application and admission processes; educational programs and activities; employment policies, procedures, and processes; and university facilities. The University takes active measures to prevent such conduct and investigates and takes remedial action when appropriate.

**Access to Information – Eagle Connect.** Students’ access point for business and academic services at UNT is located at: [my.unt.edu.](http://www.my.unt.edu/) All official communication from the University will be delivered to a student’s Eagle Connect account. For more information, please visit the website that explains Eagle Connect and how to forward e-mail: [eagleconnect.unt.edu/](http://eagleconnect.unt.edu/)

**Emergency Notification & Procedures.** UNT uses a system called Eagle Alert to quickly notify students with critical information in the event of an emergency (i.e., severe weather, campus closing, and health and public safety emergencies like chemical spills, fires, or violence). In the event of a university closure, please refer to Blackboard for contingency plans for covering course materials.

**Student Evaluation Administration Dates.** Student feedback is important and an essential part of participation in this course. The student evaluation of instruction is a requirement for all organized classes at UNT. The survey will be made available during weeks 13, 14 and 15 of the long semesters to provide students with an opportunity to evaluate how this course is taught. Students will receive an email from "UNT SPOT Course Evaluations via *IASystem* Notification" (no-reply@iasystem.org) with the survey link. Students should look for the email in their UNT email inbox. Simply click on the link and complete the survey. Once students complete the survey they will receive a confirmation email that the survey has been submitted. For additional information, please visit the SPOT website at [www.spot.unt.edu](http://www.spot.unt.edu/) or email spot@unt.edu.

**Retention of Student Records.** Student records pertaining to this course are maintained in a secure location by the instructor of record. All records such as exams, answer sheets (with keys), and written papers submitted during the duration of the course are kept for at least one calendar year after course completion. Course work completed via Canvas online system, including grading information and comments, is also stored in a safe electronic environment for one year. Students have the right to view their individual record; however, information about student’s records will not be divulged to other individuals without proper written consent. Students are encouraged to review the Public Information Policy and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) laws and the University’s policy. See UNT Policy 10.10, Records Management and Retention for additional information.

**References and Cross References**.

UNT Policy 04.008, Records Management and Retention

UNT Policy 06.035, Academic Freedom & Academic Responsibility

UNT Policy 06.038, Safety in Instructional Activities

UNT Policy 06.039, Student Attendance and Authorized Absences

UNT Policy 06.003, Student Academic Integrity

UNT Policy 16.001, Disability Accommodation for Students and Academic Units

UNT Policy 16.005, Sexual Harassment